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IAC-D-82/7

4 June 1956

Brief for U. S. Information Agency Membership in the IAC

Background

In the spring of 1954, the U. S. Information Agency (USIA) requested the DCI to study its intelligence needs. DCI agreed, and the completed study was submitted as IAC-D-82. The IAC approved, in July of 1954, pertinent sections of the study, including the conclusion that "USIA should have an intelligence organization designed to ensure that full use is made of the resources of the intelligence community and to be responsive to those USIA needs which cannot be met by the community."

While IAC-D-82 held that USIA should not become a member of the IAC at that time, it recommended that "the question of IAC membership should be reexamined after sufficient time had passed for implementation of the report."

Advantages of USIA Membership in the IAC

The primary mission of USIA is to engage in activities designed to affect public opinion and combat hostile propaganda abroad. To assist the Agency in its mission, the intelligence responsibilities of the Office of Research and Intelligence (IRI) include measurement of foreign public opinion and attitudes and the analysis of hostile propaganda.

Membership of USIA in the IAC would benefit both the intelligence community and USIA, with the principal advantages including:

Fuller and more timely use by the IAC of USIA's unique assets and resources;

Increased responsiveness of the IAC to both long-range and immediate USIA requirements;

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Deeper awareness within the intelligence community of propaganda intelligence as a vital segment of the complete intelligence picture of any area or country.

Among the unique USIA assets and resources of which the IAC would make fuller and more timely use are:

- * The established mechanism for measurement of foreign public attitudes on issues affecting the U. S. national interest.

(A poll conducted in Iceland accurately forecast the unpleasant developments involving NATO and U. S. airbases in that country. A similar survey could have been conducted in, for example, Ceylon prior to the recent elections.

This service, the only one of its kind in the Government, has never been requested by the IAC, and USIA--since it is not kept informed of IAC deliberations--has never been in a position to offer the facility at appropriate times.)

- * USIA field personnel--numbering 1,200 Americans and 7,000 local employees--at 200 posts in 79 countries.

(Not only do USIS employees travel more frequently and more widely than other members of the Country Team, but--by the very nature of their activities--they have sources and channels available exclusively to them. In a significant number of posts, furthermore, USIS officers are the only official Americans--if not the only Americans--resident in the area.

While voluntary reports from USIS posts currently total 2,000 per month, the potential--except in terms of USIA requirements--has been exploited only sporadically.)

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Increased IAC responsiveness to USIA requirements would

- * Insure timely receipt by USIA of items not now received or received too late to be of value. (USIA does not, for example, regularly receive IAC series papers, PDs, draft NIEs, or FBIS ticker items marked 'IAC only');

Eliminate certain critical gaps. One example concerns USIA's present attempt to compile an estimate of communist propaganda expenditures outside the bloc. Despite the recognized importance of propaganda in the communist scheme of things, no such estimate has ever been made.

An increased awareness of propaganda intelligence as a vital segment of the complete intelligence picture would add significantly to the comprehensiveness and accuracy of estimates.

- * Propaganda is more than words spoken, printed, broadcast. It is more than threats or promises or statements of national leaders, more than a slanted film. It also encompasses activities like trade fairs, cultural exchanges, exhibits.
- * Propaganda viewed in its entirety is a weapon-- used by the enemy, used by us. It is, further, a weapon used in both cold and hot wars. It is a weapon designed not to kill people or demolish cities, but rather to create favorable attitudes and elicit desired actions. The uses of propaganda have always played a central role in communist strategy. This country has never fully reacted to this fact, perhaps because, until comparatively recently, this country had no propaganda apparatus of its own.

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- * It follows that propaganda intelligence is more than sifting of intelligence for items usable as ammunition. Propaganda intelligence must also estimate the enemy's propaganda intentions. It must assess the effectiveness of his propaganda. And it must include analysis of his propaganda apparatus--its command structure, control, policies, methods, and financing.
- * What propaganda intelligence would contribute to the intelligence picture, then, are such factors and considerations as: public attitudes on given issues, probable public reaction to given situations or events, and an indication of the nature and relative priority of the attitudes which the enemy is trying to create and what actions he hopes to elicit from the populace.

Note on Annex

The Annex to this memorandum, entitled "United States Information Agency, Office of Research and Intelligence", is designed to provide brief data on the mission, assets and resources, and current procedures of IRI. As such, it necessarily duplicates a few points covered in the foregoing, but, for the most part, it serves to supplement and present additional details.

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